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Washington Roundup

CIA Wins Delay on Bill

From Wire Dispatches

WASHINGTON — The Senate granted Tuesday an 11th-hour plea by the Central Intelligence Agency for a delay in considering a bill designed to protect federal employees from being asked personal questions.

The action provoked an angry outburst from the bill's author, Sam J. Ervin Jr., D-N.C., who said the CIA was seeking a complete exemption from the bill to give it the "unmitigated right to kick federal employees around."

A spokesman said the agency would make no comment on Ervin's charges. However, it was learned that the CIA has complained that the bill might undermine its ability to protect itself from penetration by enemy agents.

Under the bill, which had been scheduled to be debated and possibly voted upon Tuesday, federal agencies would be prohibited from asking their employees about their finances, religion, sex activities or family relations.

It would also forbid questions about employees' outside activities which are unrelated to their work, and their race, religion or national origin. In addition the bill would prohibit pressure tactics aimed at coercing federal workers to buy bonds or support political candidates.

The bill contains an exemption that would permit the CIA and the National Security Agency to ask its employees about their finances, sex attitudes, religion and family affairs if necessary in specific cases to protect the national security.